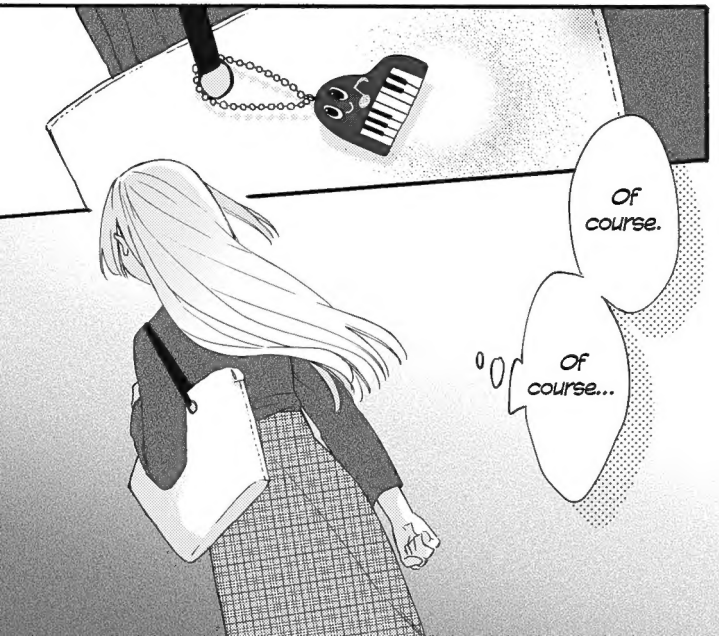
Reize
Suzuka.
Mother.
Are you leaving?
Yes. To prepare for my tests.
I'll be returning in the evening.
I see.

I've heard from your teachers that a new transfer student scored second place...
Since you've won the previous competition for your club, I suppose that's one matter settled.
So will you be fine with your tests?
If that student manages to—
IMPOS-SIBLE.
IT'LL BE FINE, MUM.

You're a child of our house, after all.
...Yes,
Of course.


Of course.
Of course...

Woah.
Beep
Kcnk
What a coinci-dence...
Agh!
That's not what I picked!
coulda sworn i chose the energy drink...

AH!
HIBIKI-SAN?!
Ok. How's this. Know me yet?
Look.
equip
?
Your face's saying that you don't recognise me at all, do ya?
I couldn't tell! You don't look like yourself.
This place's near my house.
That so?
You?
What are you doing here?
catch.
Congrats, champ.
Hm? Well, it is pretty far away.
Oh, yeah.
...Isn't somewhere students from our school would come to, after all.
The library here...
TEA
equip

You're amazing, y'know?

You can really do anything, can't ya?

Oh? Guess I said something I shouldn't have.

There we go. There's your sussy smile.

Rude.

What about you? You came here to study too?

Even though you're one of those elite students?

...Thank you.

It's about time for me to start studying, but...

Clock

...Does it put you off?
Nope.
I'M IMPRESSED.
Oh...
Actually,
What's there to feel put out about?
Well...
Now that you know, I'm not perfect anymore, am I?

Rise
Basically, you're...
Ah...
Ahh.
I see...
Pout
A real hard worker, aren't cha?

It's alright...
You don't have to live life bearing everything on your shoulders.

...Hmph.
I suppose.
Woah.
Damn, you're cold!
Move.
But your concern is wasted on me.
But she has a point.

Did you watch yesterday's drama?
Even I think the way I live my life is clumsy...
Hello~
Bearing it all... Huh.
Hey, isn't that~
Buzz
Buzz
Yeah.
Class 3?
The transfer student's shoe locker, right?
Woah, nasty...
They've really done it now... Class 3...
Such a poor thing...

WOMP
Good morning!
Suzuka-samaaaa~!
That...
Whatcha looking at?
...
Hmm... I'm not too sure...
It's probably been about two weeks now...
!
Should we call a teacher?
Mine is just above hers too.
Since when?
Oh my Goodness, this
Ah...
It looks like Hibiki Waon's being bullied by a part of Class 3.

...Su-
Suzuka-sama...?
Sorry, could you hang on to my bag for a bit?
Smile
!! OF COURSE!!

That's the first time I've seen her angry...(/

Two weeks ago...

That was the day we went back home together...

SAY SOME-THING!
!
This is...
DON'T GET COCKY!
THE ONLY REASON SHE'S BOTHERING HERSELF WITH YOU IS THAT YOU'RE A TRANSFER STUDENT!
YOU ARE NOT FIT TO STAND NEXT TO SUZUKA-SAMA!
YOU STILL DON'T GET IT EVEN AFTER WE'VE DONE ALL THAT?!

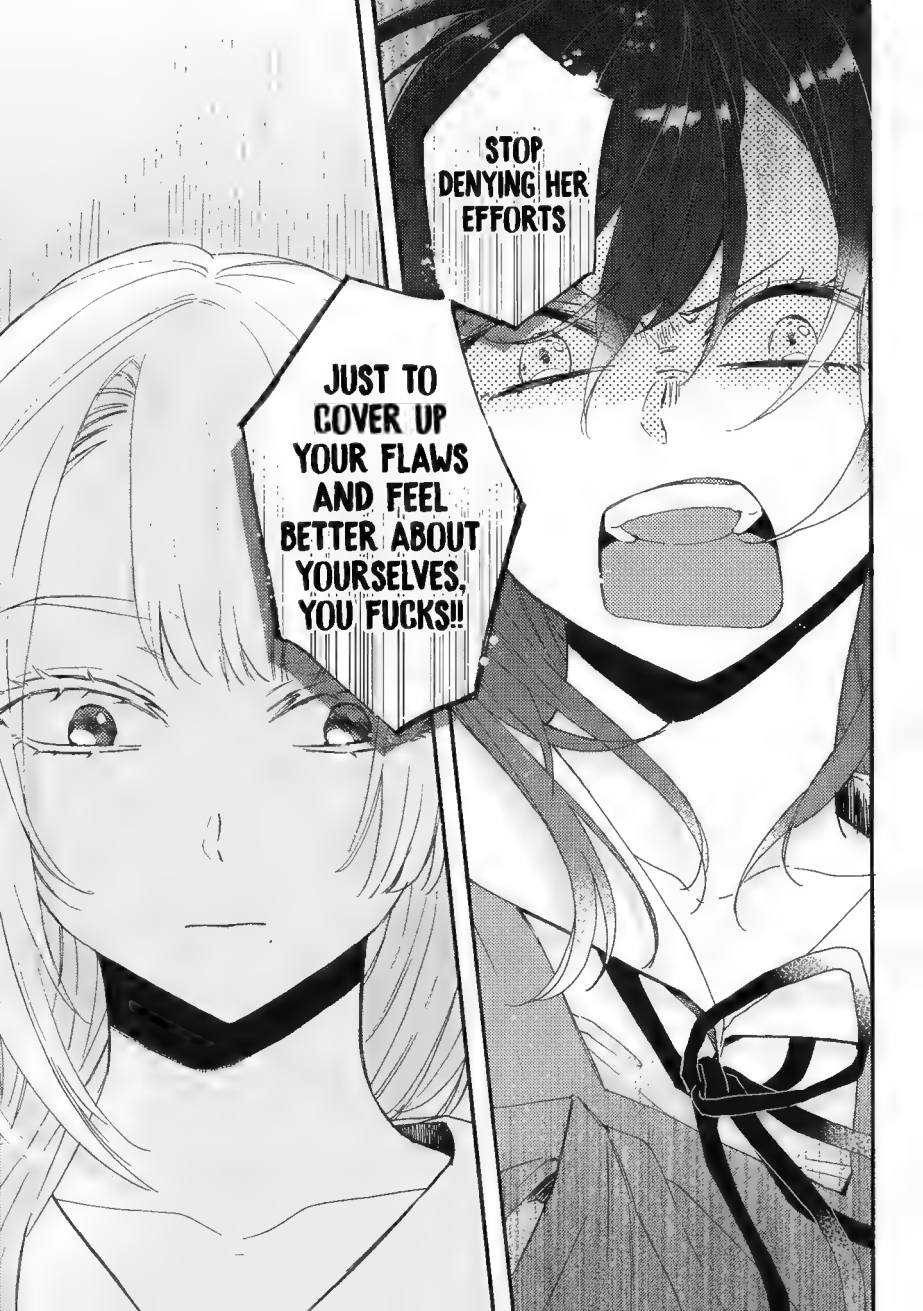
But you...
Suzuka-sama belongs to everyone!
Sneak
Until now, everyone was equal to her...
Now she's showing favouritism to a nobody like you!
How'd you find out?
Flash
Smack

...HAH.
You wouldn't understand, would you, transfer student?
KASHA
...
She is flawless.
Unlike you here, you commoner.
She's smart.
She's sporty.
She's kind to everyone...

Semester Examination Rankings
Year 2
No. 1 Reizei
No. 2 Hibi
No. 3 Ku
And the recent exam results too.
I bet someone like you had to study to your breaking point...
Y'ALL ARE DIS-GUSTING.
She was born with everything you could wish for!

...WHAT?
Skritch
Skratch
Ughhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhhh hhhhhhhhhh...
...
WHAT...?!
It's true that I was studying like a mad dog for the test.
But what's it matter to y'all? Y'all ever put in more effort than others for anything in your lives before?
Did you know that she's been studying in secret?
That she practises archery until her hands are covered in blisters?
!
Y'all really don't got eyes now, do ya?

WHA...
ARE YOU INSULTING ME?!
If you have, then stop casually putting other people onto your little pedestals.
YEAH, I AM.
!
AND YOU LITTLE SHITS ARE THE ONES GOING AROUND INSULTING HER.


STOP DENYING HER EFFORTS
JUST TO COVER UP YOUR FLAWS AND FEEL BETTER ABOUT YOURSELVES, YOU FUCKS!!

...Why?
Why would you...
I think it's best if you take your leave now.
Crrks

Su-

SUZUKA-SAMA!

Um...

We're...

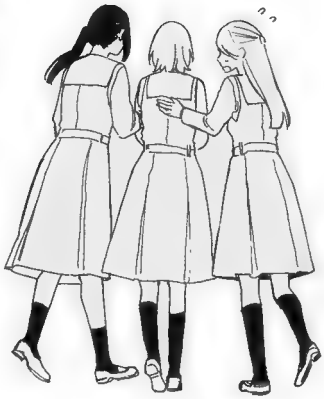
LEAVE.

Daaamn. Girls' schools sure are something.

WAVE

WAVE

Heh.



And why do you look like you're gonna cry?

!

Looks like it dropped when I was dragged over just now.
I...
...Have always played my role out to perfection.
?
So that I would never have to rely on others again.
Engaging with outsiders on such matters!
Preposterous!
And that's how I became "Suzuka-sama".

Even if there's no one who truly acknowledges me,
I thought that that would be enough for me.
I know best the effort I put into all that I do.

...I started to remember.
But because of you...
There are people who do acknowledge me for who I am.
I wonder why...

And that gives me strength.
Everything that you say seems to echo in my heart.

BADUMP
...HM?
Speaking of which,
Badump...?
Why didn't you say anything about being bullied?
Bullying...?
It's not that big a deal.

'Sides, you're too perfect, so now all these problems are coming out of the woodwork, right?
Couldn'ta been helped even if I'd told you.
Didn't want you to go thinking it's all your fault, see.
!
It's fine to just have one little flaw in you, y'know?
Flaw...
You're right; I don't.
I bet it's something you won't really get, though.
You're so perfect it's a burden on you.
OY.

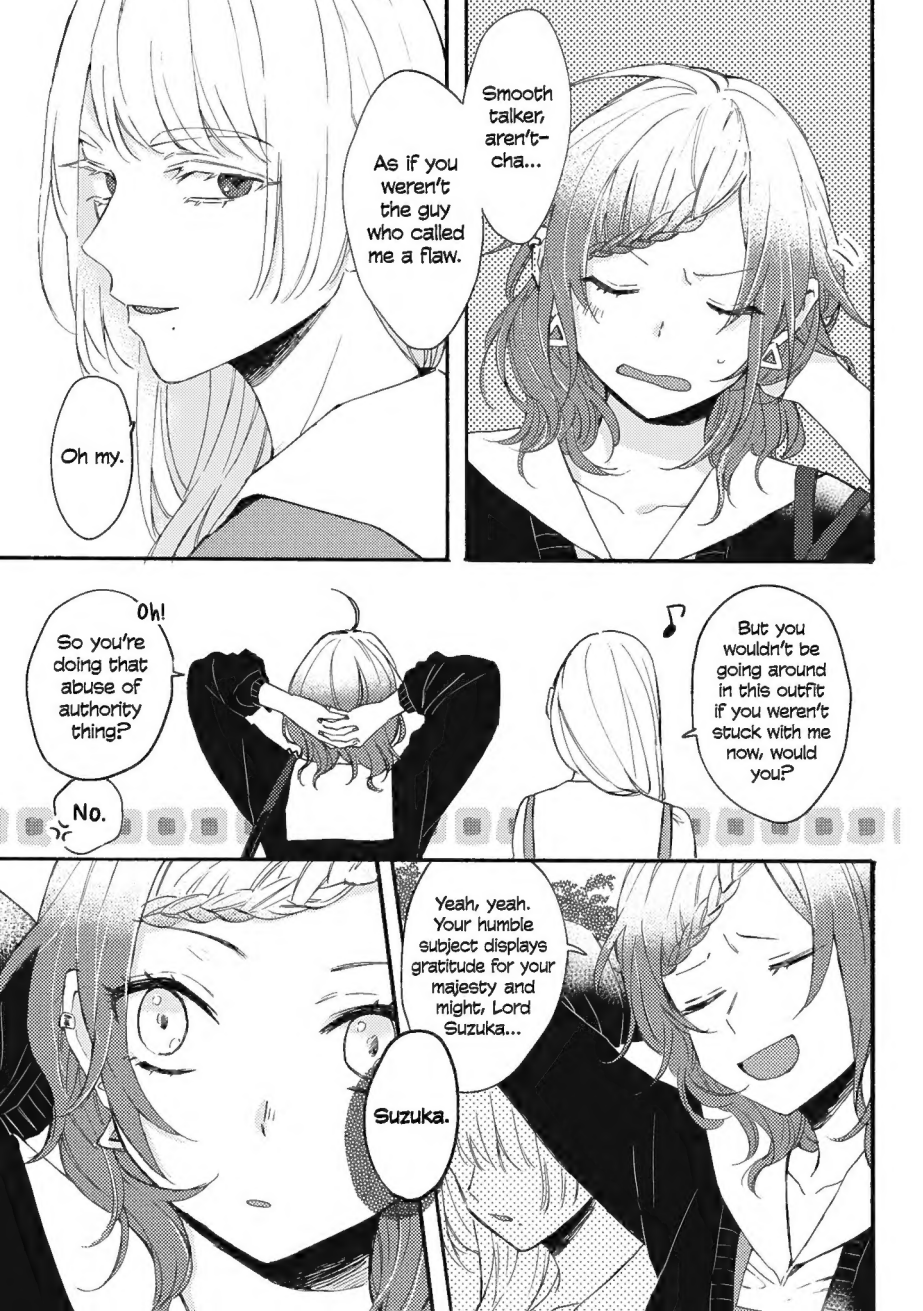
But that flaw doesn't have to be in me, does it?

For example...

BAM BAM BAM
BAM BAM
BAM
Hoooo ooooo oooo!
Now this is what I'm used to!
Black hair really wasn't my thing.
CHATTER
...I know that I was the one to suggest this, but...

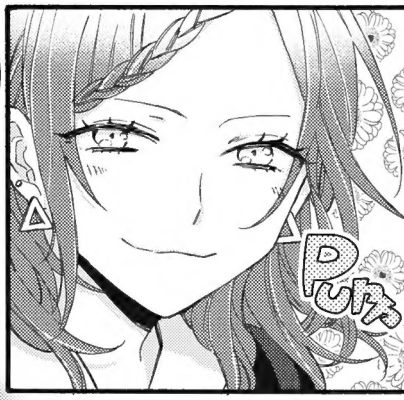
...Ahhh.
Right, that.
How are things with your sister?
Who's that?!?
To begin with, you went all that way for her...
BUZZ
BUZZ
Huh yeah, there's no one's going 'Kyaa Kyaa' around you anymore, is there?
That's fine; I don't mind.
MUFU
THEY WERE ANNOYING TOO.
OH?!
But you were so cute pretending to be a wallflower, Onee-chan!
A yankee? Yep, I knew all along!
Ehe
...Is what she said.
Like sister, like sister...

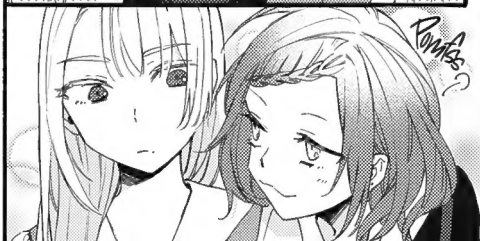
Besides,
I'd rather lend my ears to a single jewelled voice than a hundred different noises.
Jewel...


Smooth talker, aren't-cha...
As if you weren't the guy who called me a flaw.
Oh my.
But you wouldn't be going around in this outfit if you weren't stuck with me now, would you?
Oh!
So you're doing that abuse of authority thing?
No.
Yeah, yeah. Your humble subject displays gratitude for your majesty and might, Lord Suzuka...
Suzuka.

Call me Suzuka.

Waon.





Mangaka: @yorumohatarako | Translator: sanshouowo | Redrawer: Paint | Typesetter: Paint | Quality Check: sanshouowo

One of the core motifs of this work is "echoes". The name of the deuteragonist, Hibiki Wa'on (響 和音), when literally translated, gives 'Echo Harmony' or 'Echo Goodsound', with 'Echo' being her surname. There's a similar play on words at the end when Suzuka calls Wa'on the owner of a 'jewelled voice' (玉音) [lit. Jade Sound]. The protagonist's name, Suzuka (涼), just means 'breeze'. Awfully elegant.

Another little fun fact is that the House of Reizei (冷泉) is in fact a real thing. It's one of Japan's Noble Houses, a house of court nobility to be precise. As a branch family of the Fujiwara clan, its history dates all the way back to the heights of the Heian era, continuing on through the ages; and it likely retains no small measure of influence and import in modern-day Japan, what with its 800 years of history. But alas, I am not of the House of Reizei, so I will never know for sure. The real House of Reizei doesn't seem to be matrilineal nor matriarchal. For more information, visit https://reizeike.jp/.

-sanshouowo